



RECREATION

Northwood Master Plan
Adopted July 15, 2024

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Recreation Chapter was prepared under the guidance of the Master Plan Subcommittee.

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The Recreation Chapter was prepared by EF | Design & Planning, LLC with TZM Planning.

Cover Image: Play structure at Northwood Athletic Fields Playground (Liz Durfee)

CONTENTS

- Recreation Snapshot..... 1
- Goals..... 2
- Introduction 3
- Recreation Staff & Commission 5
- Fields, Playgrounds & Amenities..... 6
 - Northwood Athletic Fields 6
 - Northwood Elementary School 10
 - Coe-Brown Northwood Academy 10
- Natural Areas & Passive Use 12
 - Water Access Points..... 12
 - Beaches & Lakes..... 15
 - Access to Beaches & Water Recreation 16
 - Trails & Open Space..... 17
- Recreation Department Programs..... 22
 - Youth Sports, Programs & Events 22
 - Swimming Lessons..... 22
- Other Recreation and Leisure Opportunities 23
 - Chesley Memorial Library 23
 - Community Center..... 23
 - Sports 23
 - Private Facilities, Regional Resources & Events 23
- Funding 25
- Additional Planning Needs & Considerations 27
 - Communication, Outreach & Advertising 27
 - Staff and Volunteer Capacity and Coordination 28
 - Demographic Projections..... 29
 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion 29
 - Climate Change 29
- Recommendations 31
 - Policy (P) 31
 - Initiatives & Projects (IP)..... 31

Programs & Sports (PS) 33
Communication (C)..... 33
Regulatory (R) 34
Implementation..... 35
Implementation Table 35
Potential Funding Sources..... 42

RECREATION SNAPSHOT

NORTHWOOD ATHLETIC FIELDS¹

- 2 playgrounds
 - 2 soccer fields
 - 1 baseball/softball field
- multi-purpose field
 - pavilion
 - Serenity Garden picnic area
 - small raised garden beds
 - access to extensive trail network

Sports fields and courts at

- Northwood Elementary School
- Coe-Brown Northwood Academy

RECREATION PROGRAMS²

- 50+ programs and events run by the Recreation Department in 2023
- Blackbear Youth Lacrosse
- Northwood Youth Baseball
- Adult Softball

NATURAL AREAS & WATER ACCESS

1,062+ acres Area of conservation lands and public lands that are open to the public³

30 miles Miles of mapped and digitized trails in State Recreational Trails database⁴

NORTHWOOD MEADOWS STATE PARK⁸

10 miles Miles of trails

0.28 miles Miles of universal access trail

8 Town or State owned water access points⁵

3 Town beaches⁶

Poor Water quality rating for Northwood Lake beach based on NHDES sampling data from 2003–2023.⁷ Cyanobacterial and aquatic invasives are also a problem in multiple lakes in Northwood

OUTDOOR RECREATION

hiking · snowshoeing · snowmobiling · xc skiing · mountain biking · road biking · fishing · ice fishing · wildlife observation · ice skating · swimming · motorized boating · canoeing · kayaking · sailing · paddleboarding · sunbathing · trail running · picnicking · events · performances · playground · sports · conservation land monitoring

Data reference and chapter page:

1. Recreation Department, Recreation Commission, pg 6–10

2. Recreation Department, pg 21

3. NH Geodata Portal, Conservation & Public Lands Layer, Conservation Commission pg 16–20

4. NH Geodata Portal, NH Recreational Trails Layer, pg 16–20

5. NH Geodata Portal, Water Access Points Layer, pg 12–15

6. Town of Northwood, SRPC Promoting Outdoor Play, pg 14–15

7. NHDES, pg 14–15

8. NH Geodata Portal, NH Recreational Trails Layer, pg 16–17



Northwood Athletic Fields, Upper Field Tom Morgan

GOALS

Northwood’s overarching goals for Recreation include:

- 1 Promote recreation as an important part of a healthy lifestyle.
- 2 Provide diverse recreation opportunities for people of all ages and abilities, and interests.
- 3 Increase awareness of programs, events, and opportunities.
- 4 Maintain and enhance existing facilities.
- 5 Enjoy natural areas, trails, and lakes while minimizing impacts of human activities.
- 6 Enhance trail systems and connectivity.
- 7 Expand collaborative efforts and events across town.

A guiding principle of the Master Plan is to protect and preserve Northwood's natural resources and provide citizens of all ages with recreational opportunities to enjoy these resources



Enabling recreation for all ages is a key component of the community's vision for the future.



Northwood Lake (Wini Young)

INTRODUCTION

Recreation plays a role in quality of life, natural resources and water resources protection, and the local economy. Northwood's open spaces and places for community members to come together and recreate have tremendous value.

There are a wide variety of recreational opportunities in Northwood.

Between the Northwood Athletic Fields and school amenities, there are a number of sports fields, courts, and playgrounds, which are summarized in Table 1. The Recreation Department runs over 50 programs and events a year at these locations and in concert with other public and private entities such as Chelsey Memorial Library. The Town is home to an abundance of conservation land and natural areas and a well-developed network of trails.

Northwood's Town beaches and boat launch along with three State-owned access points provide residents with access to the shoreline and waters of Bow Lake, Northwood Lake, Meadow Pond, Harvey Lake, Lucas Pond, and Dole Marsh.

This chapter includes:

- An inventory, analysis, and maps of Northwood's sports fields, playgrounds, water access points, natural areas, and trails.
- Description of recreational programming and participation rates.
- Discussion of needs and opportunities
- Public input on recreational needs and interests
- Links to additional resources and sources of information
- A set of recommendations to continue to enhance recreational offerings in Northwood.



Lower Athletic Fields (Liz Durfee)

Table 1. Recreational amenities at fields, playgrounds, beaches, boat launches, and Northwood Meadows State Park

	Passive Use	Bicycle Trail/Path	Nonpower Boating	Motorized Boating	Trail/Trailhead	Fishing Access Point	Playground	Swimming	Beach	Picnicking	Baseball/Softball	Soccer	Multi-use Field	Basketball	Tennis	Track/Cross Country	Ice Skating / Ice Fishing	Indoor Courts	
Fields & Playgrounds																			
Northwood Athletic Fields	X	X			X		X			X	X	X	X			X			
Northwood Elementary School							X					X	X	X					X
Coe-Brown Northwood Academy Sports Fields											X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Beaches & Boat Launches																			
Northwood Lake Beach	X							X	X	X								X	
Northwood Lake Boat Launch	X		X	X		X													
Mary Waldron Beach	X		X	X				X	X	X								X	
Mary Waldron Boat Launch	X		X	X		X													
Bennett Bridge Beach	X					X		X	X	X								X	
Woodman Park/Lucas Pond Beach	X		X			X			X	X								X	
Northwood Meadows State Park	X	X	X		X	X				X									

Source: NH Geodata Portal, NH Recreation Inventory, SRPC Promoting Outdoor Play Inventory

78% of the 169 respondents to a 2024 Master Plan Survey *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that parks and recreational facilities and programs in Northwood are important to their quality of life.

52% of survey respondents indicated that existing recreational facilities and programs met their needs. There was high interest in activities for seniors and indoor recreation space or a community center. Many respondents commented on youth athletics, with remarks ranging from desire for more programs to concern that recreation in Northwood is too narrowly focused on youth athletics.

RECREATION STAFF & COMMISSION

Town recreation and recreational facilities in Northwood are managed and overseen by Northwood Recreation Department and the Recreation Commission.

The Recreation Department has two part-time staff and typically hires several seasonal positions. Department staff are responsible for developing and implementing programming and managing facilities including the Athletic Fields and Town's beaches.

It is the mission of the Northwood Recreation Department to create recreational opportunities for growth and enhancement by developing an array of diverse, affordable programs and events that promote community service and environmental awareness while meeting the physical, mental, social, and psychological needs of our community.

The Recreation Commission was established in 1995 to support ongoing management of the Recreation Department. The Commission consists of seven members who are appointed by the Board of Selectmen and are committed to serving a three-year term.



The Commission is an advisory body, tasked with helping the town to set departmental priorities, manage facility development, and set policies related to recreation in Northwood. The Commission aims to meet the needs of a wide spectrum of Northwood residents and to consistently improve the provision of recreation programs and services offered through the recreation department.

The Recreation Commission is in the process of developing a Strategic Plan as of May 2024.

Residents can join the Recreation Commission! Check the [Commission's page](#) on the Town's website for openings.



Vision: The physical design and amenities of the community provide indoor and outdoor places to gather, recreate, and connect with others.



Northwood Athletic Fields, Lower Field (Tom Morgan)

FIELDS, PLAYGROUNDS & AMENITIES

Northwood Athletic Fields

The Northwood Athletic Fields are the primary sports fields and playgrounds for Northwood residents. The approximately eight-acre facility is situated in a central location in town one mile east of the Town Offices and half a mile west of Northwood Elementary School.

The Athletic Fields include soccer fields, a baseball/softball field, multi-purpose field, two playgrounds, and parking areas. The upper level has a pavilion, and the lower level is home to Serenity Garden, a shaded picnicking area.

The Athletic Fields are centrally located in Northwood and connected to an extensive trail system extending from the Guptill-Lamprey Pasture conservation area to Northwood Meadows State Park, Forest Peters Wildlife Management Area, Coe-Brown Northwood Academy Forestry Lot Trails, NALMC Trails, and other conserved lands.

The Recreation Commission's vision for this site is for it to be a town center that

Athletic Fields Amenities:

- 2 playgrounds
- Soccer fields
- Multi-purpose upper field with softball/baseball field
- Pavilion
- Small raised garden beds
- Serenity Garden picnic area
- 2 parking areas
- Port-a-potty
- Storage shed

offers uses and purposes across generations. The Commission is currently in a planning phase to determine future uses at the fields, which may include multi-purpose courts for basketball, pickleball, and other activities. The Commission intends to develop a walking track around the fields and a fitness exercise trail. The lower level requires better flow for efficient ingress and egress and there is demand for more parking.



Northwood Athletic Fields (Liz Durfee)

Staff, members of the Recreation Commission, and many individuals who completed the 2024 Master Plan Survey noted maintenance needs that require attention. The upper fields need leveling, loam, grass seed, and drainage improvements. The port-o-potty, pavilion, and playground also require upgrades to make them ADA accessible. Equipment storage has also been identified as a need. Parts of the complex including the backside of the fields require invasive species management.

In 2024, the Town approved a \$30,000 warrant article to continue improvements to the recreation complex including expansion of parking, improving drainage, loaming and seeding and general equipment and improvements to the existing fields. The Town also approved a \$20,000 addition to the Recreation Facilities Expendable Trust Fund established for the maintenance, improvement, and repairs of Town recreational facilities, beyond the capabilities of department personnel and equipment.

Any expansion of programming at the Athletic Fields should include a budget for maintenance and upgrades.

Maintenance & Improvements

Short-term and ongoing needs include:

- Leveling, turf replacement or infill, and marking lines for multiple sports on the playing fields
- Mowing
- Spring cleaning
- Fencing
- Loam, seed, and install sprinklers
- Winter plowing of the parking lot
- Draining improvements
- Designated handicapped parking
- Storage for sports equipment and maintenance equipment
- Port-a-potty service.

Long term improvement plans for the Athletic Fields should consider:

- Replacing playground mulch with rubber matting that is more accessible
- Trash removal in fields and parking areas
- Integrate accessible facilities and playground features
- Improved vehicular circulation
- Relocate the pavilion to allow for seating around it for events
- Pave the parking areas
- Stormwater management
- Lighting
- Bleachers
- Restrooms
- Renting space to food truck(s)
- Signage with a site plan of the complex
- Irrigation
- Expand amenities to include multi-use courts (i.e. basketball and pickleball), a walking track around the fields, a fitness

exercise trail, community garden space, indoor recreation and community center space.

Additional Program Ideas and Interests:

- Boy / Girl Scouts
- Programs that teach about how to be community members
- National Night Out
- Larger parades
- Space to gather
- More options for competitive youth sports with other towns
- Programs for seniors, such as bocci courts, horseshoe pits, flexibility playgrounds and other equipment suited to seniors
- Activities and crafts
- Continued development of Northwood Athletic Fields including walking trails that are suitable for older people and perhaps link to existing trails, community garden, programming for seniors and younger children
- Pickleball and basketball courts
- Swimming lessons
- Recreation Center/ Community Center
- Indoor space
- ATV trails
- Space for square dancing
- Indoor ice skating
- Space for group fitness
- Schedulable fields
- Splashpad or water feature

Source: 2024 Master plan Survey and May 1, 2024 Recreation

Other Ideas:

- Bicycle pump track
- Disc golf course
- Skateboard park
- Pollinator garden



CASE STUDY - Multi-Use Park: Little River Park, Lee, NH

What: Little River Park on North River Road in Lee is a located on a former gravel pit on a 22-acre lot that is adjacent to conservation land.

The park's amenities include:

- 90' baseball diamond
- Large multi-use field
- Multipurpose hardcourt with basketball and pickleball
- Playground features (slides, swings, cargo net)
- Walking bridge
- Natural playground features
- Large, multi-level sand pit
- Walking path around park
- Connectivity to adjacent trails
- Parking and overflow parking
- Picnic area with grills
- Pavilion
- Signage
- Port-a-potty
- Storage shed
- Dog waste bags
- Trash cans

Park maintenance is divided between the Town of Lee and the Oyster River Youth Association (ORYA). In exchange, ORYA has priority scheduling in accordance with an MOU. The facilities and pavilion may be rented by individuals, organizations, or private entities.

Images: Little River Park, Lee, NH (Liz Durfee)



Coe-Brown Northwood Sports Fields (Tom Morgan)

Northwood Elementary School

Northwood Elementary School is home to a ball field and a multi-use sports field, outdoor basketball hoops, two playgrounds, and an indoor gymnasium.

Youth basketball, track and field, softball and baseball are held at Northwood Elementary School. In the springtime when the fields are wet, softball, baseball, and lacrosse teams often use the gym for practice space.

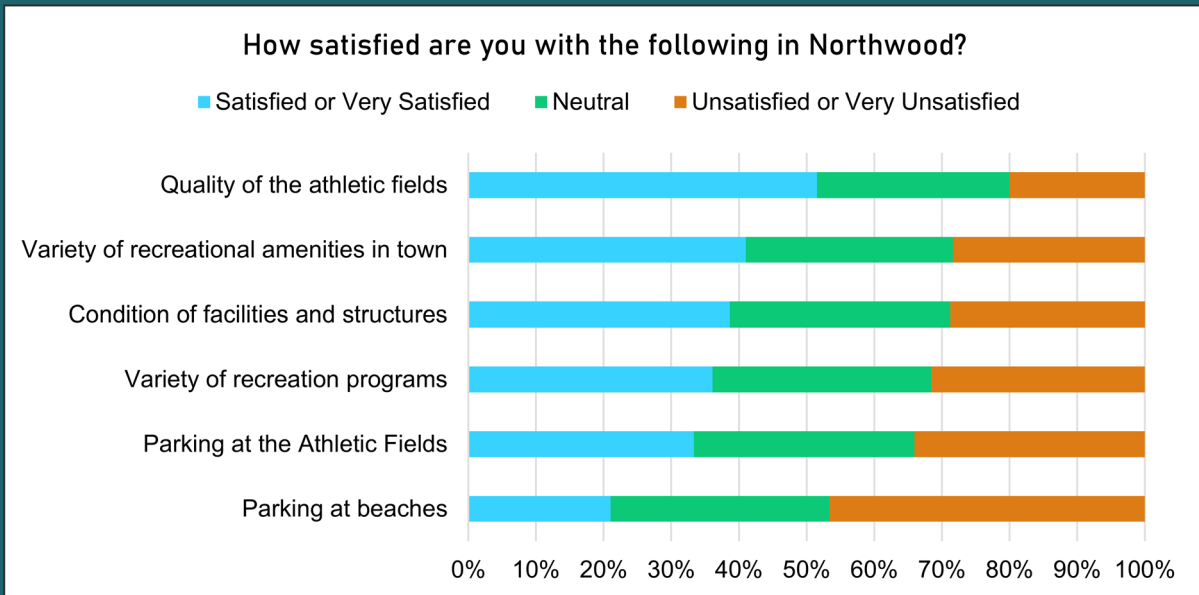
Outdoor facilities are available to the public when school is not using the fields and playgrounds or in session. The School does not rent out space but has historically allowed other local groups that serve Northwood residents (i.e. Blackbear Lacrosse) to use the fields and outdoor courts when not in use by the school or Town.

Coe-Brown Northwood Academy

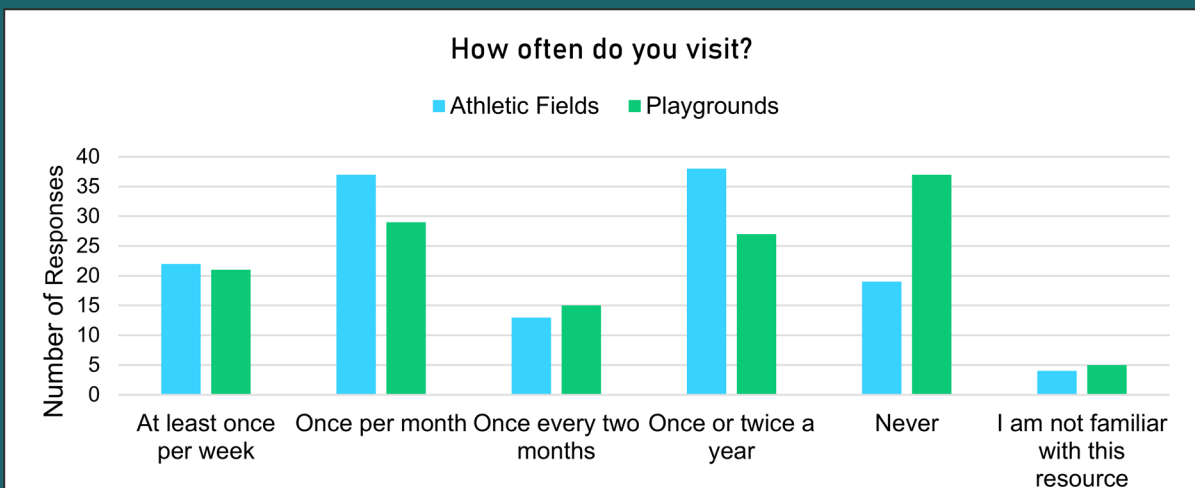
Coe-Brown Northwood Academy has numerous recreation facilities including soccer and lacrosse fields, outdoor basketball, tennis courts, multiple baseball/softball fields, and an outdoor track. These facilities are used primarily by the school. Some community events are also held at Coe-Brown.

2024 Master Plan Survey Input

Over 50% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of the Athletic Fields, while satisfaction with parking at the complex was lower. Overall, 41% of survey respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the variety of recreational amenities in town and 36% are satisfied or very satisfied with the variety of recreational programs.



Approximately 15% of the 135 respondents to the 2024 Master Plan Survey reported that they visited the Athletic Fields and Athletic Fields playgrounds at least once per week and over one quarter of respondents visit the fields monthly. Of the respondents who visit the Athletic Fields at least once per week or once per month, approximately 64% are satisfied or very satisfied with the facility, and around 50% agree or strongly agree that the facility will be sufficient to meet the needs of the community.



NATURAL AREAS & PASSIVE USE

Northwood’s abundant forests and beaches provide excellent opportunities to get outside and exercise, play, and relax.

Water Access Points

There are eight public water access points in Northwood, including two on Bow Lake, two on Northwood Lake, and one site on Meadow Pond, Lucas Pond, Dole Marsh, and Harvey Lake (Figure 2 and Table 2). These locations enable activities including swimming, picnicking, fishing by boat and from the shore, boating, and ice skating. None of these sites have docks.

Five access points are owned by the Town of Northwood. Northwood residents can also access nearby, State-owned sites on Jenness Pond in Pittsfield and Pleasant Lake in Deerfield.

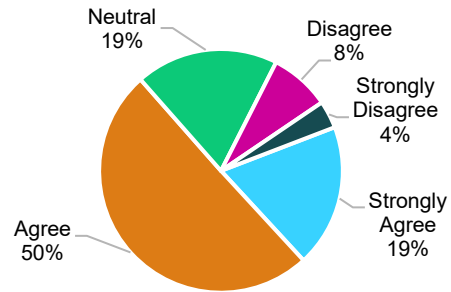


Figure 1. Survey input: Water Resources are accessible to me (Source: 2024 Master Plan Survey)

21% of Master Plan Survey respondents said that they are satisfied with parking at beaches.

Table 2. Water access points in Northwood

Map ID	Water Body	Facility	Access Type	Parking	Ramp	Shorebank Fishing Allowed
<i>Town-Owned</i>						
A	Bow Lake	Mary Waldron Beach Mary Waldron Boat Launch	Beach Ramp	Gravel No parking at boat launch	Precast panels	No
B	Bow Lake	Bennett Bridge Beach	Beach	Gravel	None	Yes
C	Northwood Lake	Northwood Town Beach	Beach	Gravel	Paved	Yes
D	Harvey Lake	Harvey Lake Beach	Cartop	Unimproved	None	Yes
E	Northwood Lake	Northwood Boat Launch	Trailer/Ramp	Gravel	Gravel	Yes
F	Lucas Pond	Woodman Park/Lucas Pond Access	Cartop	Dirt	None	Yes
<i>State-Owned</i>						
G	Meadow Pond	Northwood Meadows State Park	Walk-in	Gravel	None	Yes
H	Dole Marsh	Dole Marsh	Walkin/fishing	Dirt	None	Yes

Source: NH Geodata Portal, NH Water Access Points

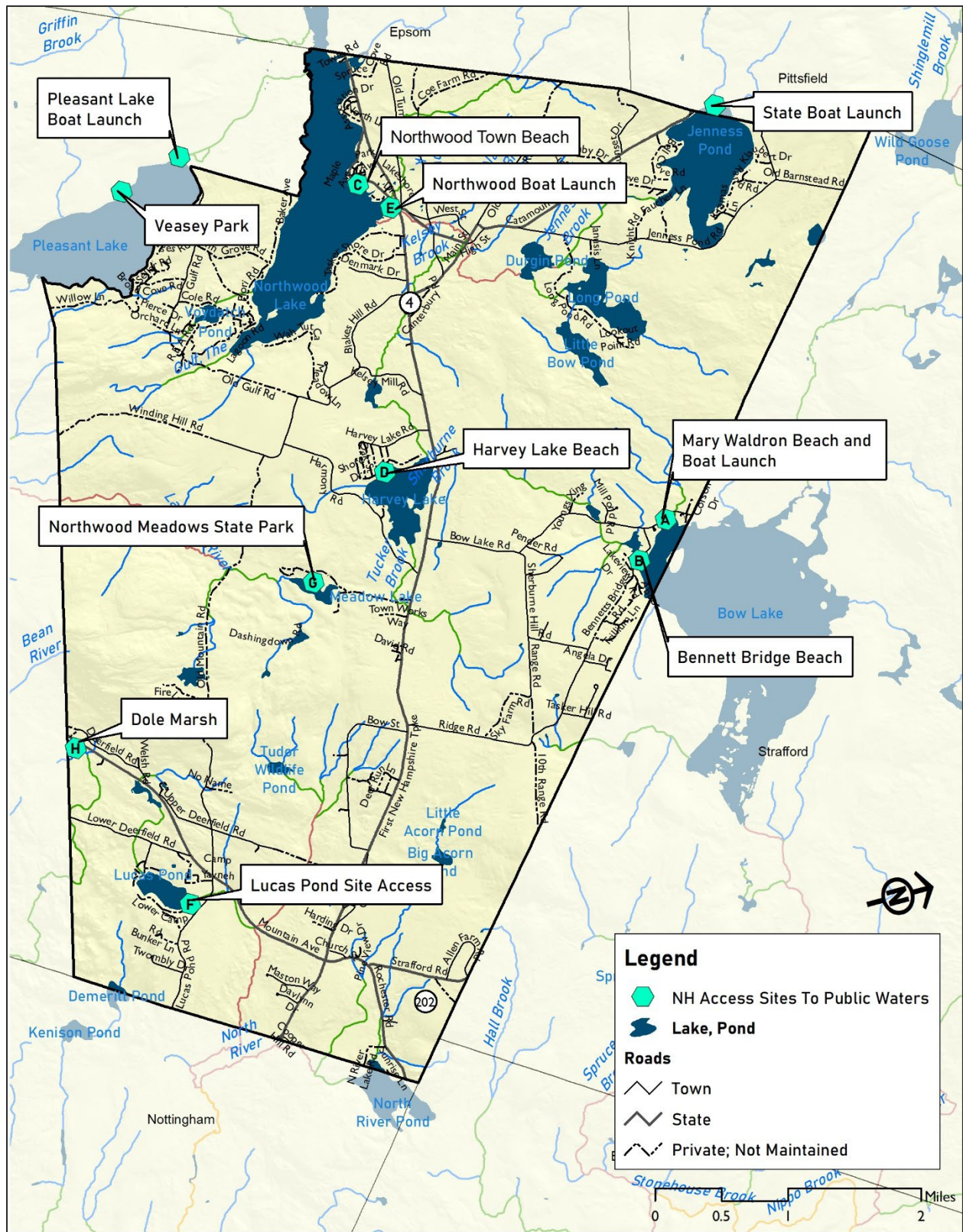


Figure 2. Locations of access points to public waters (Source: NH Geodata Portal, NH Access Sites)

Beaches & Lakes

Northwood Lake Beach

Northwood Lake Beach is a small sandy beach with picnic tables. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, a resident parking permit decal is required to park at Town beaches. There are portable toilets during the summer but no drinking water available.

Water quality at Northwood Lake Beach is often poor due to high levels of bacteria that exceed safe levels for swimming. As a result, this beach is often closed for swimming.

Invasive species have been documented at Northwood Lake and a management plan has been developed for milfoil. Refer to the Natural Resources & Water Resources Chapter for information on water quality and aquatic invasives.

Bennett's Bridge Beach

Bennett Bridge Beach is a small sandy beach located at the southwest end of Bow Lake. A permit from the Town is required to use the very limited parking spaces and access the beach. There are portable toilets but no drinking water available at Bennett Bridge Beach.

Mary Waldron Beach

Mary Waldron Beach is located on the southwest side of Bow Lake not far from Bennett Road Bridge. Mary Waldron Beach has a sandy beach, picnic tables, and small parking area. Both Bennett's Bridge and Mary Waldron Beach are great swimming beaches.

Lucas Pond

Woodman Park/Lucas Pond Access is a small, shaded beach on the north end of Lucas Pond. The parcel was donated to the Town in memory of George Chestley Woodman, 1st. Lt. USAF, who died in WWII. This site is a good spot for fishing.



Northwood Lake Beach



Bennett's Bridge Beach

Images: Liz Durfee

Northwood has several volunteer-based watershed, lake, and river associations. In conjunction with NH Department of Environmental Services, these associations manage Northwood's lakes and ponds:

- [Northwood Lake Watershed Association](#)
- [Pleasant Lake Preservation Association](#)
- [Harvey Lake Watershed Association](#)
- [Jeness Pond Shore Owners Association](#)
- [Bow Lake Camp Owners Association](#)

Access to Beaches & Water Recreation

Less than one-quarter of survey respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with parking at beaches. Parking at beaches in Northwood is limited and constrained by the space available near the beaches. The enforcement of resident parking decals should be strengthened to ensure that the limited spaces are available to residents.

There are no public docks in Northwood, which may limit access to the lakes by individuals who are not able to carry their boats to the water and enter a canoe or kayak from the beach. Currently, the town also lacks a canoe, kayak, or paddleboard rental shop. While “service businesses” are permitted by the Town’s Land Use Ordinance under specific performance criteria, future changes to zoning should accommodate uses that support residents’ access to recreation, physical activity, and a healthy lifestyle, such as gyms, canoe rental, or indoor recreation facilities.

Poor water quality due to the presence of fecal bacteria, Cyanobacteria, or variable milfoil also constrain recreational opportunities. In 2023, only 60% of monthly water samples from Northwood Beach were clean and two advisories were issued.¹ NHDES categorizes beaches with less than 70% clean samples as poor. Over the last two decades, similar results were received. Northwood Beach was among five out of 66 beaches that were categorized as poor between 2003 and 2023.²

Harvey Lake experiences cyanobacteria blooms in late June/early July as well as September. Refer to the Natural Resources & Water Resources Chapter for additional information about water quality.

The NHDES [Healthy Swimmer Mapper](#) provides water quality monitoring reports for fecal bacterial and cyanobacteria during the monitoring season.

NHDES also maintains a [Swim Guide](#) and a lake ice-in and lake ice-out guide through the [Volunteer Assessment Program](#). When the lakes freeze, there can be good ice skating.



Sign at Northwood Lake Beach (Liz Durfee)



View from northern overlook on Saddleback Mountain (Wini Young)

Trails & Open Space

There are over 1,062 acres of conservation and public lands that are open to the public for hiking, snowshoeing, and other low-impact activities. Many of these locations have trails. Others allow hunting and are suitable for wildlife observation.

A map of publicly accessible conservation and public lands and recreational destinations is shown in Figure 3.

Within Northwood, there are nearly 30 miles of mapped trails in the State's database of recreational trails and numerous other trails that have been developed but not digitized (Figure 3).³ Not all trails are open to the public for recreation.

The Conservation Commission is working to develop and blaze trails on properties throughout Town. Many properties already have trails and blazing (Table 3). Refer to the Natural Resources & Water Resources Chapter for a complete list of publicly accessible open space and natural areas.

The Meadow Lake Trail in Northwood Meadows State Park provides 1.5 miles of universal access trail, meaning that it provides recreation opportunities for everyone regardless of differences in ability.⁴

To maximize the benefits of open space to the community, trail maintenance, signage, and parking should be incorporated into open space planning and management. Invasive species removal is another important component of managing these natural areas and preserving high quality habitats. Amenities like benches, fitness trail elements, or scheduled hikes, snowshoes, and activities could further enhance the appeal and use of open space in Town.

84% of respondents to a statewide survey conducted by the UNH Survey Center noted that investing in the general trail system should be a top priority for NH outdoor recreation areas.

Source: [NH Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2024-2028](#)

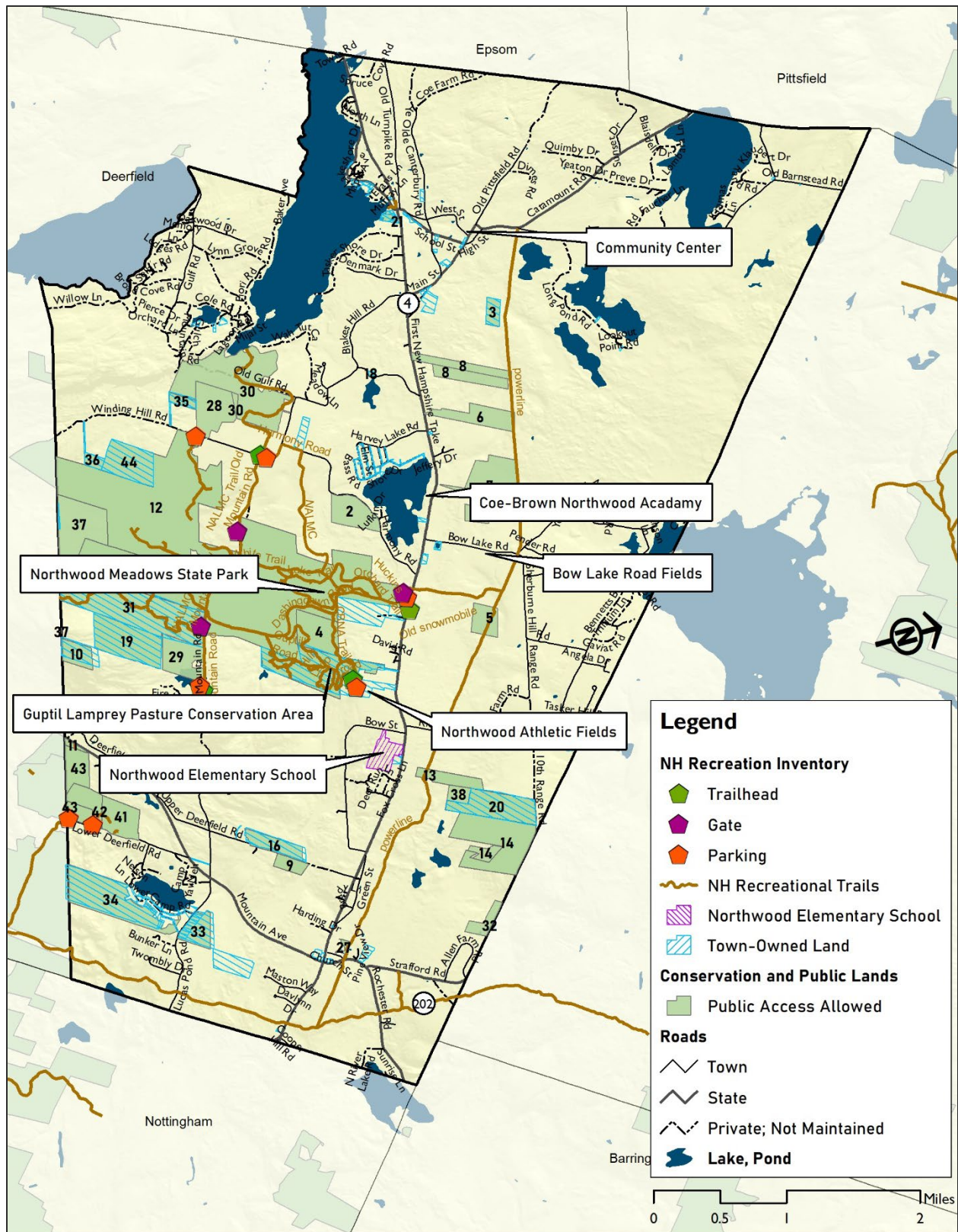


Figure 3. Recreation sites and conservation and public lands where public access is allowed (Note: not all trails in the State's Recreational Trails data layer are open to the public (Source: Town of Northwood, NH Geodata Portal, Conservation and Public Lands, NH Recreation Inventory Points, Water Access Points, NH Recreation Inventory Sites, NH Recreational Trails)

Table 3. Status of trails, blazing, and parking at Town-owned open space and conservation land where public access is permitted.

Fig 3 ID #	Name	Tax Map and Lot	Parcel Size (acres)	Trails Developed	Trails Blazed	Parking
3	Carey Lot	212-72	13.2			
10	Deslaurier Lot Town Forest	242-20	23.9	Yes	Yes	Yes, Old Mtn. Rd
16	Giles Town Forest	235-40	29.5			
17	Guptill Lamprey Pasture Conservation Area	222-30	101.0	Yes	Yes	Yes, Athletic Fields
18	Kelsey Mill Historic Site	224-34	0.9			
19	Lalish Lot	242-21	82.0	Yes	Yes	Yes, Old Mtn. Rd
20	Low Lot/ Little Acorn	221-40-1	70.0			
21	Narrows Brook Conservation Area	109-23	0.3			
22	Narrows Brook Conservation Area	109-21	0.9			
23	Narrows Brook Conservation Area	109-24	1.0			
24	Narrows Brook Conservation Area	109-22	3.1			
31	Parsonage Lot Town Forest	236-90	198.0	Yes	Yes	Yes, Old Mtn. Rd
33	School Lot Town Forest North	244-11	32.0			
34	School Lot Town Forest South	244-42	102.0			
35	Brower Lot (Bog Lot)	238-16	9.8			
36	Manganaro Lot	240-20	8.3			
44	Yeaton	238-6	58.8			

Note: Some properties are not directly accessible from a public road.

Source: NH Geodata Portal, Conservation and Public Lands layer (Dec 2023), Town Forest Management Plan, Town of Northwood Conservation Commission

Image: Liz Durfee

Trails for Snowmobiling and Mountain Biking

The Northwood Crankpullers Snowmobile Club and New England Mountain Bike Association both help create and maintain trails in Northwood.

Northwood Meadows State Park, Forest Peters Wildlife Management Area, and power line corridors have trails for snowmobiling and mountain biking (Source: NH Geodata Portal, NH Recreational Trails).

The NH Snowmobile Association identifies several additional snowmobile-friendly trails in its online map and app.

Online, printable trail maps are available for locations including:

[Northwood Meadows Area Trail Map](#)

[Guptill-Lamprey Pasture Trail Map](#)



Trail systems around Northwood Meadows State Park are well connected to a large

network of conservation and public lands but there are opportunities to further integrate trails and destinations within the community. When asked about connectedness and accessibility by foot or bicycle, 67% of survey respondents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly’ agreed that trail systems, recreational

areas, schools, and other destinations should be better connected and more accessible by foot or bicycle. One missing linkage is to connect the Athletic Fields with Northwood Elementary School to enable kids and other community members to walk or bike between these locations on a safe route away from 1st New Hampshire Turnpike/ NH Route 4 (Figure 4).

Signage from trails that direct trail users to local businesses can help capture the economic benefits of recreation-oriented tourism and activities, while also improving the user’s experience.

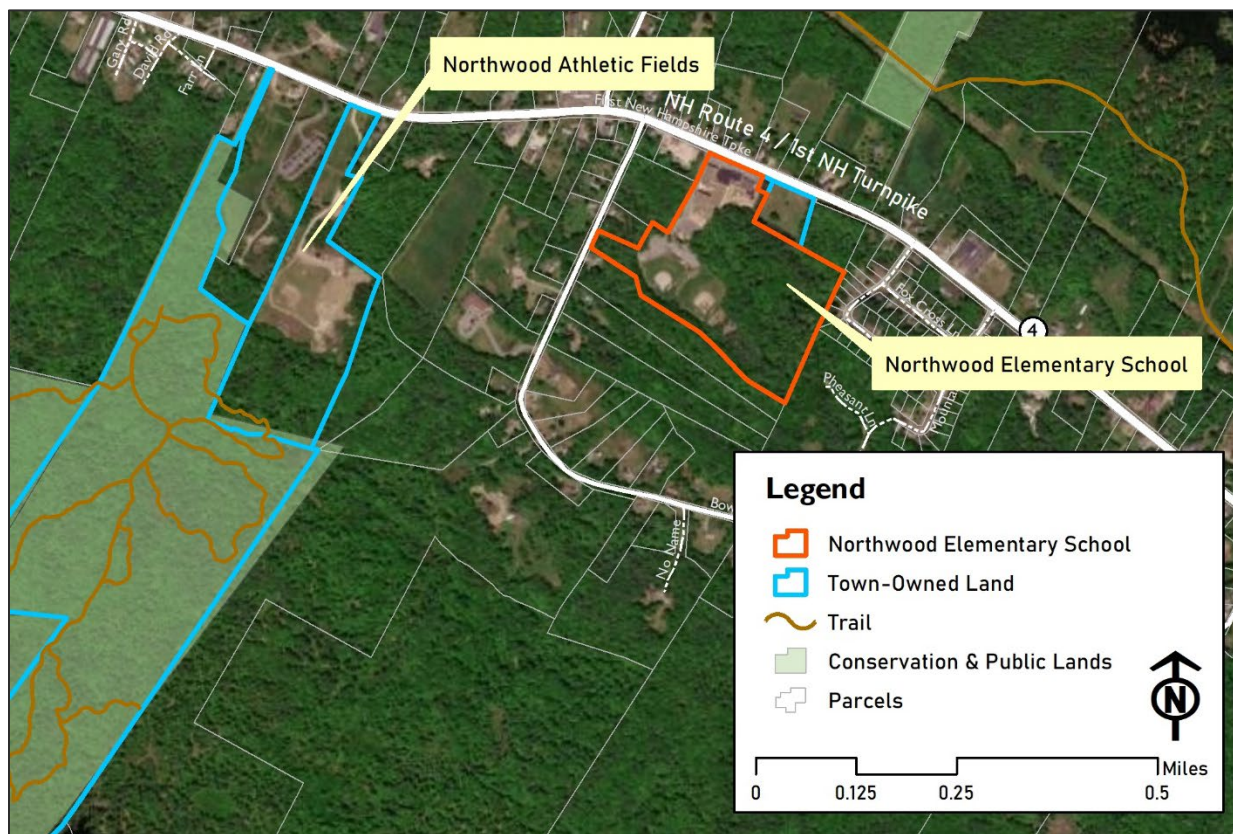


Figure 4. Map of Town-owned land and conservation and public lands in the vicinity of Northwood Elementary School and Northwood Athletic Fields (Source: NH Geodata Portal, Parcels, Conservation & Public Lands, NH Recreational Trails)

Trails don't just benefit people who use them, they can:

- Bring in revenue to local businesses
- Encourage physical fitness
- Attract new businesses
- Provide alternative means of transportation

- Attract and retain residents
- Increase property values
- Foster a sense of appreciation and stewardship for resources.

Learn more about trail benefits from UNH's [Nature Economy Fact Sheet #1](#)

CASE STUDY: Leelaneau TART Trail, Michigan

What: The TART Trail is a 17-mile paved off-road connection between Traverse City and Suttons Bay in Northwest Michigan. The trail is a scenic regional attraction and a path for locals to use for exercise or visiting businesses in other communities.

Amenities: Accessible, dogs on leash allowed, parking, picnic areas, restrooms, [map](#), info-kiosk

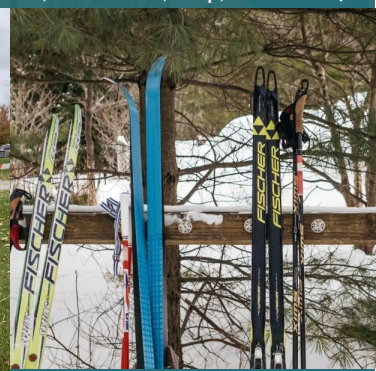
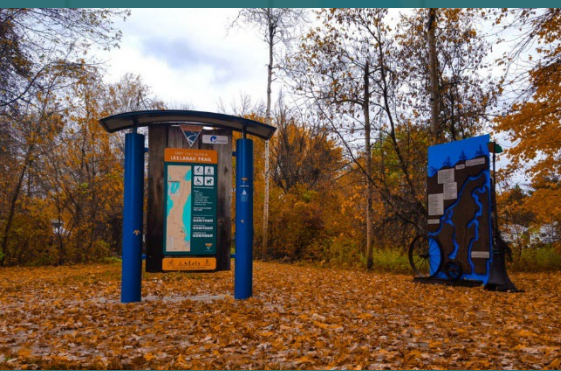
Activities: Biking, cross-country Skiing, running/walking

About: The Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails, Inc. (TART Trails) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that formed in 1998 when four individual trail groups in the Traverse City, MI area united to create a stronger force for recreation and alternative transportation in northwest Michigan. TART is dedicated to providing recreation and transportation opportunities through preserving open space corridors, building trails, and advocating for active living and outdoor recreation. Our work includes negotiating easements, hosting events that promote healthy lifestyles, and collaborating with community partners to support healthy, happy connected communities.

Funding trail maintenance: Individuals or businesses can sponsor a mile marker along the trail. Sponsorship includes a sign with a logo or dedication and sponsors are recognized as TART Trail Sustainers Circle members.

The trail features art and signage directing visitors to local businesses. The trail helps increase traffic to business, boost local business seasonality, build sense of community and outdoor culture. A [study of economic impact](#) found that the average annual direct spending for use of the trail was \$71,238.

Images (left to right): TART Trail, TART Trail, Yelp, TART Trail



RECREATION DEPARTMENT PROGRAMS

Youth Sports, Programs & Events

The Recreation Department hosts nearly 50 programs per year, including single events like the Food Truck Festival and multi-day programming, including camps and youth sports.

In 2023, the following programs and events were offered through the Recreation Department:

Team Athletics:

- Multi-Sport Camp
- Youth Basketball
- Youth Fall Soccer
- Youth Spring Soccer
- Soccer Camp

Individual Active Programs:

- Archery Lessons
- Bike Helmet Give Away
- Fort Building Camp
- Sailing Lessons
- Ski & Snowboard Program
- Swim Lessons

Community Events:

- Adopt a Spot
- Adult Easter Egg Hunt
- Baby-Sitting Class
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Fairy Houses Building
- Fall Foliage Festival
- Flying Dog Show
- Food Truck Festival
- Halloween Trunk or Treat
- June Jam Music Festival
- Letters to Santa
- Pumpkin Carving
- Puppet Show

- Town Wide Yard Sale
- Trout Fishing Derby
- X-Mas Tree Burn & Fireworks
- X-Mas Tree Lighting Ceremony

Swimming Lessons

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, swimming lessons were offered through the Recreation Department. In 2024, the Town will again be offering lessons in collaboration with Lantern Light Camp at their facility on the west end of Northwood Lake. This location can accommodate more swimmers as well as non-residents.

OTHER RECREATION AND LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES

Chesley Memorial Library

Chesley Memorial Library hosts a number of regular programs for youth and adults. Adult programs include book clubs, writers group, and senior café. Youth groups include story time, summer reading challenge, NH 1000 books before kindergarten, and junior book discussion group. Chesley Memorial also hosts special events such as guest speakers and authors, Won't You Be My Neighbor Day, games, holiday activities, craft events, school vacation week programs, and special guests like the Cat in the Hat and an owl ambassador from the Center for Wildlife.

Residents can also borrow from the Library of Things or reserve museum passes to Children's Museum of New Hampshire, Seacoast Science Center, and Squam Lake from the Library.

Community Center

The Town's Community Center, located at 135 Main Street, is used by groups such as Northwood Squares and Northwood Quilters Club. The facility is small and cannot accommodate large groups. It also lacks parking and accessibility.

Sports

Northwood youth can play lacrosse through Black Bears Youth Lacrosse, a non-profit organization that provides instructional lacrosse programs for kindergarten through 8th grade boys and girls for the towns of Northwood, Nottingham, Strafford, Barrington and surrounding towns. Youth baseball is

CASE STUDY: ORYA

The Oyster River Youth Association (ORYA) provides inclusive, fair, diverse, and developmentally appropriate recreational programs to the youth of Durham, Lee, and Madbury, NH. ORYA is the primary programming entity for youth sports in these communities. ORYA meets the changing needs of the children and families in our community for sports and recreational activities by acquiring and maintaining facilities, promoting volunteerism, and seeking collaborative and strategic partnerships. ORYA is an independent 501 (c)3 non-profit that is funded partially by Durham, Lee and Madbury and through fundraising. Fundraising supports the annual operating expenses which include facility & field maintenance, program & organization insurance, office expenses, staff salaries, 3rd party accounting costs, website hosting, annual registration software, merchant account fees, and much more. Fundraising also supports larger program and organization improvements. The organization is run by a board and one full time executive director.

available through the Northwood Youth Baseball Association. The Northwood Nighthawks are part of the Lamprey River Little League.

Adults can join a softball league in Northwood.

Private Facilities, Regional Resources & Events

An array of private gyms and studios that offer classes, facilities, and team sports ranging from pools to rock

climbing walls to indoor soccer are located within a short drive of Northwood in the Concord and Seacoast Regions.

The Recreation Department partners with entities like Saddleback Campground for its spring fishing derby and Lantern Light Camp which recently began leasing the Wah-Tut-Ca Reservation on Northwood Land, for swimming lessons.

Events including Northwood's 250th Anniversary celebration and Bean Hole Bash in 2023 were held the Athletics Fields, using the pavilion, Serenity Garden, and fields. The Recreation Department and Chesley Memorial Library sponsored multiple events that were part of the 250th celebration.

Bow Lake Athletic Fields

Located at 90 Bow Lake Road, the privately owned Bow Lake Athletic Fields offer potential additional space for athletics. There are two fields for soccer, lacrosse, or other sports at this site. The Town is not currently using this field, it has historically been used for both Town and private recreation with permission from the property owner.

Learn more about regional resources from Strafford Regional Planning Commission's Pathways To Play and Promoting Outdoor Play projects, which have documented and mapped recreational resources throughout the Strafford Region.



FUNDING

The Recreation Department has an operating budget of around \$75,000. This budget is for staffing the Department. The Department has two part-time staff positions: the Director and the League Coordinator. The Department hires seasonal employees such as beach attendants, referees, maintenance, and other positions.

While the total Town budget increased by 20% over the last decade, the budget for parks and recreation only increased by 8% (Figure 5). The share of the total budget that is allocated to parks and recreation in 2024 is 1.8% of the total operating budget appropriations.⁵

Where Do Taxes Go?

Only 14% of a property owner's tax bill goes to The Town of Northwood, and less than 2% of that to recreation. The remaining portion of the tax bill that does not go to the municipality goes to the School District (72%), State Education fund (10%), and County (4%).

Ex. A property owner whose property is assessed at \$400,000 pays around \$5,520 in taxes, of which \$752 goes to the Town and around \$14 goes to recreation.

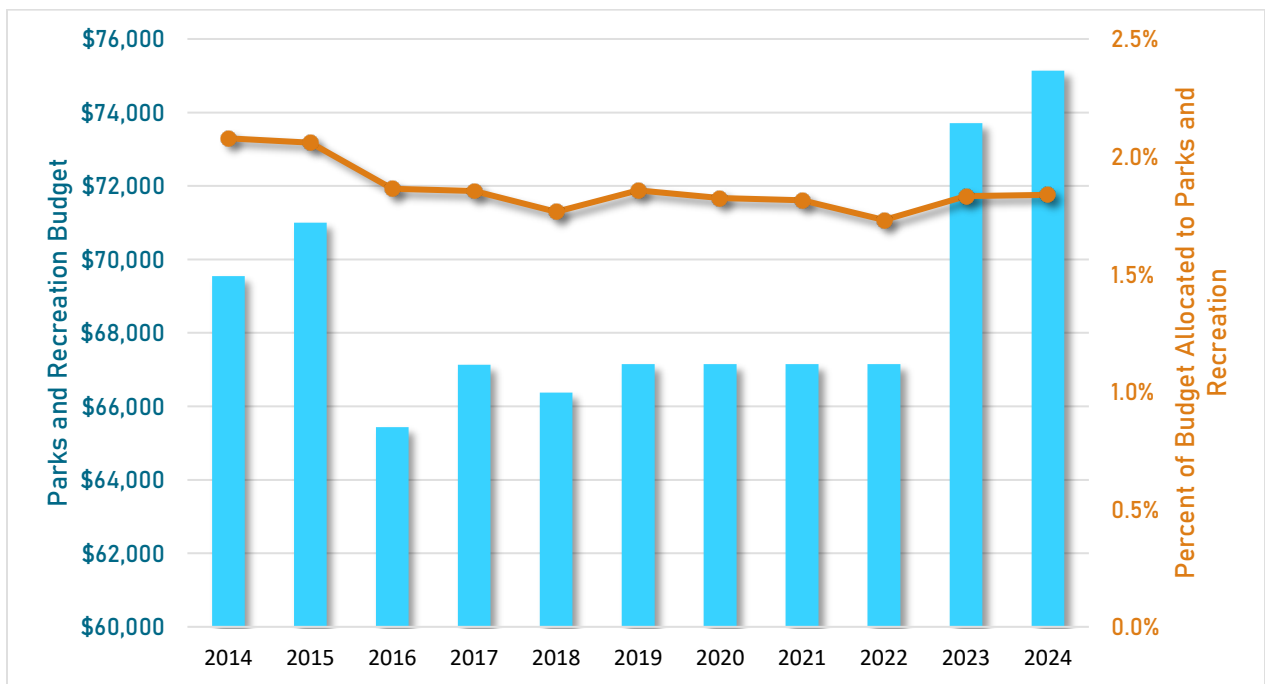


Figure 5. Annual appropriations for Parks and Recreation and percent of appropriations budget allocated to Parks and Recreation (2014-2024)

(Source: Town of Northwood Annual Reports for the years 2014-2023, Account 4520)

The Town's Recreation Revolving Fund was created in 2002. It is set up to collect and expend user fees and

sponsorships for specific programs and events without having to appropriate the funds through the annual budget. The

expenditures are based on the user groups that are contributing funds. For example, if the fund is fed in large part by youth sports, the majority of funds are used for uniforms, field maintenance, and hiring officials, etc.⁶ Generous donations to the Town from private enterprises and nonprofits have helped to support this fund.

The Town also has a Recreation Capital Reserve Fund. This fund was created to cover maintenance projects at recreation facilities that are outside the scope of the Recreation Department Staff's and are unanticipated.⁷

Voters have approved recent Warrant Articles for the Northwood Athletic Fields. In 2022, \$27,000 was approved for continuing improvements to the complex, including expansion of parking, improving drainage, ledge removal, loaming and seeding. In 2023, \$30,000 was approved for similar maintenance and improvements. A maintenance budget of \$20,000 was approved by Warrant Article in 2024. Funds will be deposited from the unassigned fund balance into the Recreation Facilities Expendable Trust Fund that was previously established for the maintenance, improvement, and repairs of Town recreational facilities, beyond the capabilities of department personnel and equipment.

Recreational programs and events are funded primarily through user fees. Some events, like the Food Truck Festival, which brought in a profit of around \$10,000, are revenue-generating events for the Town that help fund other recreational activities.

Friends of Northwood Recreation, a group of Northwood citizens and 501(c)3, played a significant role in fundraising for playgrounds at the Athletic Fields. The playgrounds at the Athletics Fields were funded in part through the [NH Land and Conservation Fund Grant Program](#) and installed with volunteer support.



ADDITIONAL PLANNING NEEDS & CONSIDERATIONS

Communication, Outreach & Advertising

Getting the word out about recreational events, programs, and opportunities is important. Residents cite the challenge of learning about programs and express discontent with the Town's website. The Town and the Recreation Department uses social media to advertise and disseminate information. Around 1,500 individuals 'like' the Northwood Recreation Facebook page and around 1,000 people subscribe to the Recreation Department's email distribution list. The Town also has notification boards at the Town Hall and Northwood Athletic Fields.

An online town calendar with events and links to additional information would be a helpful resource to help spread information about activities and events. A community calendar that is not owned by the Town has recently been created. The Town's website could also be enhanced to feature more announcements and an easier way to navigate to documents and files.

Community members expressed interest in a way to schedule facilities online. This could be connected to the calendar of events.

The Town could also pursue funding or volunteer support to develop a local newsletter.



Improving communication about Town events, Town business, and other activities and news is part of the Vision for Northwood.

Case Study: Envision Berwick & the Berwick Bi-Monthly (Berwick, ME)

Envision Berwick is a committee of dedicated volunteers who have been appointed by the Berwick Select Board to implement the Town's Comprehensive Plan, including implementing the 2014 Envisioning Downtown Berwick Vision Report and recently adopted Recreation Master Plan.

Envision Berwick issues the Berwick Bimonthly, a town calendar and newsletter released at the beginning of each month, followed by a mid-month update. Individuals can subscribe to stay informed about what's happening in Berwick, from events and updates from town departments, to craft fairs, elections, major school events and more! April 2024's edition can be viewed [here](#).

This publication started as a volunteer run initiative and is now prepared by part time staff.



Residents can [subscribe](#) to updates from one or more Town Departments, Boards, Commissions, and Committees, including the Recreation Department email list.

Staff and Volunteer Capacity and Coordination

Additional staff capacity would enable expansion of the existing programming for youth and addition of adult programs. However, the Town needs the tools and systems in place to both maintain the spaces these programs would occupy and the storage for sports and maintenance equipment prior to considering a significant expansion of the programs it offers.

A designated senior group could help to foster a sense of inclusivity among community members and identify and promote opportunities for recreation, socialization, and giving back to the community. One group to leverage support from is the existing Senior Café, which meets weekly at the Library.

Existing and potential recreation partners that may provide added capacity to develop, maintain, and fund recreational opportunities in Northwood:

- Northwood Elementary School
- Coe-Brown Northwood Academy
- Friends of Northwood Recreation
- Friends of Northwood Meadows
- Conservation Commission
- Chesley Memorial Library's Senior Café participants
- Rotary club
- Lyons club
- New England Mountain Bike Association
- Northwood Crankpullers
- Friends of the Library
- Strafford Regional Planning Commission
- Connections Peer Support
- Lantern Light Camps
- NH Parks
- Local Lake Associations
- Local businesses, nonprofit organizations, religious institutions
- Nature Groupie, an organization that connects volunteers with volunteer opportunities
- Meetup Groups
- Facebook Groups, such as those that connect parents of young children



Staff and volunteers at Green Up Day in April 2024 (Images: Liz Durfee)

Demographic Projections

Northwood's population, which was 4,641 as of the 2020 Decennial Census, is projected to peak in 2040 at 5,253 then gradually decline over the next decade.⁸

Within Rockingham County, the share of the population age 70 and older is projected to grow significantly, accounting for 10% of the county's population in 2020 and 15% in 2050, while the share of the population under age 20, age 20 to 44, and age 45 to 69 are projected to decline.⁹

The Town should continue to plan for the recreational needs of older community members while also providing families and young to middle-aged adults with diverse opportunities that will help the Town retain and attract younger residents.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Town must consider Universal Access in its recreation planning and ensure that recreation areas are accessible and welcoming to all.¹⁰

Key findings from a [national survey of park and recreation leaders](#) include:

- Six in seven park and recreation leaders agree that park and recreation inequity is a problem nationally.
- More than nine in ten park and recreation leaders agree that it is important to address park and recreation inequities.¹¹

Examples of resources to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion:

- [A Planning Guide for Making Temporary Events Accessible to People With Disabilities](#)
- [Access Navigators - Prescott Park](#)
- [Social Equity and Parks and Recreation](#)
- [Creating Parks and Public Spaces for People of All Ages](#)
- [Creating Community Gardens for People of All Ages](#)
- [Trail Accessibility Hub](#)
- [National Center on Accessibility](#)
- [Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails](#)

Climate Change

As summarized in the Natural Resources & Water Resources Chapter, the state has experienced increased temperatures, annual precipitation, and heavy precipitation events over the last 50 years.¹² Future climate projections indicate that average temperatures, annual precipitation, and the frequency and intensity of extreme precipitation will continue to increase, and snowpack will further decrease.¹³

This will have several impacts on recreation in Northwood and the state.

Warmer winter temperatures and lower snowpack will impact winter recreation like skiing, snowshoeing, ice skating, ice fishing, and snowmobiling. In the past 50 years, the state has already lost approximately three weeks of snow-covered days.¹⁴

Warmer water temperatures may cause species composition to change, with

implications for fishing. Warmer waters may also lead to increased invasive species and more cyanobacteria.¹⁵ This, combined with increased nonpoint source pollution driven by greater precipitation rates, will threaten water quality in Northwood's lakes and likely result in increased beach closures and no-swim days.

Increases in temperature will also have impacts on recreational infrastructure as well as the health and wellbeing of recreators, who may be at risk of heat related illness. Fields may require irrigation, while heavy rain events may cause rutting and flooding.

This increase in temperature will have impacts on recreational and cultural infrastructure as well as the health and wellbeing of recreators who may be at risk of heat related illness. Impacts to recreational resources may include decreased longevity and increased maintenance needs and increased need for irrigation. Increasing winter temperatures will likely limit opportunities for sledding, skiing, ice skating, and snowshoeing. Changes in precipitation may require more stormwater management and potential flooding of low-lying fields.

Broad guidelines from the State of New Hampshire are to:

- Develop and redevelop outdoor recreation areas to be adaptable to seasonal shifts and, in turn, minimize visitor impacts on the natural environment.
- Foster stewardship for New Hampshire outdoor recreation areas as well as natural, cultural,

and historic resources through educational messaging and programs

- Strengthen interagency relationships and work collaboratively to develop a shared set of guiding principles for sustainable outdoor recreation management across NH parks and protected areas.¹⁶

Future planning considerations to adapt to these changes include:

- Increase the canopy cover at parks to provide shade.
- Use light colored surfaces for courts and play areas.
- Consider the temperature ratings of new equipment prior to purchasing and installing it.
- Install irrigation at the Athletic Fields.
- Integrate water features such as splash pads to help keep visitors cool.
- Use pervious pavements and other green infrastructure in parks to reduce stormwater runoff.
- Expand availability of indoor, air-conditioned spaces for recreation.
- Host outdoor events in the mornings and evenings, when possible.
- Increase signage about thin ice cover at trail heads and crossings in winter.
- Increase signage and education about lake water quality.
- Strengthen regulations for stormwater management and development near waterbodies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy (P)

- P1. Review this Recreation Chapter and the Implementation Table on a regular basis.
- P2. Update the Recreation Commission's Strategic Plan every 5 years.
- P3. Create a maintenance fund for new recreational amenities.
- P4. Increase funding for maintenance of and improvements to the Athletic Fields.
- P5. Improve the accessibility of all recreational facilities and amenities in Northwood.
- P6. Incorporate climate resilience into all recreational planning efforts.
- P7. Create more staff capacity by increasing the Director's time to full-time and/or adding additional staff.

Initiatives & Projects (IP)

- IP1. Continue to pursue safe travel route(s) between the Athletic Fields and Northwood Elementary School.
- IP2. Develop a plan(s) for managing invasive species at the Athletic Fields, conservation lands, and lakes and ponds and coordinate with the State and UNH to manage invasives at Northwood Meadows State Park and Saddleback Mountain.
- IP3. Collaborate with local organizations and groups and entities like Nature Groupie to conduct volunteer invasive removal workdays.
- IP4. Establish a Senior Advisory Council and coordinate with Library Café participants to identify recreational opportunities for seniors and to help connect seniors with existing programs.
- IP5. Continue to develop a multi-use plan for the Athletic Fields. Refer to the list of residents' interests on page 7 of this chapter, which include multi-use courts (i.e. basketball and pickleball), a walking track around the fields, a fitness exercise trail, community garden space, indoor recreation and community center space.
- IP6. Address short-term and ongoing maintenance and improvements at the Athletic Fields, including:
 - b. Replace turf
 - c. Lining the fields
 - d. Mow regularly
 - e. Spring cleaning
 - f. Plow parking in winter
 - g. Improve drainage
 - h. Remove trash in fields and parking areas
 - i. Designate handicapped parking

- j. Develop storage area for sports equipment and maintenance equipment
 - k. Continue contracting with port-a-potty service
 - l. Improve parking and enhance vehicular circulation during events.
- IP7. Prioritize long-term improvements at the Athletic Fields, including:
- a. Create and install signage with a site plan of the complex
 - b. Replace playground mulch with rubber matting or other material that is more accessible
 - c. Integrate accessible facilities and playground features
 - d. Improve vehicular circulation
 - e. Create seating area around the pavilion
 - f. Pave the parking areas
 - g. Improve stormwater management
 - h. Add lighting
 - i. Add bleachers
 - j. Install trash cans
 - k. Consider amenities like restrooms and concessions and/or renting space to food trucks
- IP8. Develop a fitness or exercise trail at the Athletic Fields/Lamprey-Guptill Conservation Land or another Town-owned parcel. Examples can be found at Tibbetts Field in Madbury, Stratham Hill Park in Stratham NH, and the Memorial Hospital in North Conway.
- IP9. Incorporate long-term community center planning into Town planning efforts.
- IP10. Evaluate the feasibility of creating a community center with indoor recreational space.
- IP11. Seek grants and funding for recreation and land conservation, such as the Rotary Club, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Recreational Trails Program, Safe Routes to School, and other opportunities for grants and fundraising strategies such as those identified by the National Recreation and Park Association.
- IP12. Continue to collaborate with partners like the Crankpullers and New England Mountain Bike Association to build and maintain trails and maps.
- IP13. Hold joint Conservation Commission and Recreation Commission Meetings at least once per year.
- IP14. Continue interdepartmental collaboration between the Recreation Department and Library.
- IP15. Continue to enhance Northwood's trail network, mapping, and signage.
- IP16. Improve water access to the lakes for those with mobility issues.
- IP17. Attract recreation-related businesses such as bike shops or kayak rentals.

- IP18. Improve parking at trailheads and access points.
- IP19. Coordinate with businesses to allow trail users and residents accessing boat ramps to utilize commercial parking areas.
- IP20. Repair the eroding shoreline Northwood Lake boat ramp.
- IP21. Consider developing a Town dock.
- IP22. Conduct strategic land acquisition for Recreation
- IP23. Collect usage data at Athletic Fields, beaches, and other locations.
- IP24. Maintain and improve lake access.
 - a. Replenish sand
 - b. Maintained boat launches
 - c. Improve parking
 - d. Replace picnic tables
 - e. Remove invasives and weeds

Programs & Sports (PS)

- PS1. Continue to make youth athletic programs and swimming lessons available to Northwood's residents.
- PS2. Considering partnering with active volunteers, neighboring communities, and youth sport organizations to initiate a youth athletic association and expand youth athletic programs.
- PS3. Continue to host diverse recreation, leisure, and educational events for all ages.
- PS4. Identify opportunities to create and sustain programs and facilities for seniors through user fees and other mechanisms.
- PS5. Collaborate with Lake Associations to host educational and nature appreciation events and activities.

Communication (C)

- C1. Expand, maintain, and advertise the community calendar. Add dates of events, program registration, board, commission, and committee meetings, and other important dates.
- C2. Create an online schedule and procedures for scheduling and renting Town-owned facilities.
- C3. Improve the function and user-friendliness of the Town's website and ensure information about all recreation programs and events is on the website.
- C4. Develop consistent signs and branding for all Town facilities, lands, and recreational amenities to install when replacement signage is needed.
- C5. Add kiosks with trail maps to popular trailheads.

- C6. Install signage about trail and Class VI road usage in locations where motorized vehicles are not permitted.
- C7. Increase residents' awareness of how tax dollars are used and how recreation programs are funded.
- C8. Advertise and support programs offered by CBNA and UNH.

Regulatory (R)

- R1. Enforce resident-only parking at beaches.
- R2. Permit recreational uses and retail in commercial areas of Northwood via Zoning Ordinance.

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation Table

Key

Recommendation # Category

P	Policy
IP	Initiatives & Projects
E	Programs & Sports
C	Communication
R	Regulatory

Cost

Minimal	<\$5,000 or in kind/volunteer hours
Low	>\$5,000-\$10,000
Medium	>\$10,000-\$50,000
High	>\$50,000

Responsible Party

BC	Budget Committee
CC	Conservation Commission
CEO	Code Enforcement Officer
CML	Chesley Memorial Library
LUD	Land Use Department
PB	Planning Board
PD	Police Department
PSC	Public Safety Facilities Comm.
PW	Public Works
RC	Recreation Committee
RD	Recreation Department
SB	Selectboard
TA	Town Administrator

Priority

Low, Medium, High ranking is based on the Master Plan Subcommittee and Planning Board's determination of which projects are most important to complete at the time this chapter was prepared. Ease of implementation was considered during the prioritization.

Potential Partner

BBL	Blackbear Lacrosse
CARPHN	Capital Area Regional Public Health Network
CPS	Connections Peer Support
CPS	Connections Peer Support
LLC	Lantern Light Camps
NCSC	Northwood Crankpullers Snowmobile Club
NEMBA	New England Mountain Bike Association
NES	Northwood Elementary School
NG	Nature Groupie
NHACC	NH Association of Conservation Commissions
NHBEA	NH Dept. of Business & Economic Affairs
NHDES	NH Dept. of Environmental Services
NHFG	NH Fish & Game
NHP	NH Parks
NHRPA	NH Recreation & Park Association
NYBA	Northwood Youth Baseball Association
ORYA	Oyster River Youth Association
RC	Rotary Club
RCCD	Rockingham County Conservation District
SRPC	Strafford Regional Planning Commission
UNH CE	University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension

#	Recommendation	Responsible Party(ies)	Target Date	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
P1	Review this Recreation Chapter and the Implementation Table on a regular basis.	PB, RC, RD	ongoing	High	Minimal	
P2	Update the Recreation Commission's Strategic Plan every 5 years	RC	2030, ongoing	High	Minimal	
P3	Create a maintenance fund for new recreational amenities.	RC, RD, BOS, BC	2025	High	Low	
P4	Increase funding for maintenance of and improvements to the Athletic Fields.	RC, RD, BOS, BC	ongoing	High	Medium	FNR
P5	Improve ADA accessibility of all recreational facilities and amenities in Northwood.	RC, RD	2028	High	High	FNR
P6	Incorporate climate resilience into all recreational planning efforts.	RC, RD	ongoing	High	Minimal	SRPC, Consultant
P7	Create more staff capacity by increasing the Director's time to full-time and/or adding additional staff.	BoS, RC	2027	High	High	

#	Recommendation	Responsible Party(ies)	Target Date	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
IP1	Continue to pursue safe travel route(s) between the Athletic Fields and Northwood Elementary School.	RC, CC	2028	Medium	Minimal-High	NES, NHDOT, CARPHN, SRCP, RC, LC
IP2	Develop a plan(s) for managing invasive species at the Athletic Fields, conservation lands, and lakes and ponds and coordinate with the State and UNH to manage invasives at Northwood Meadows State Park and Saddleback Mountain.	RC, CC, RD	2025	Medium	Low	Consultant, UNHCE, LA, UNH, NH State Parks
IP3	Collaborate with local organizations and groups and entities like Nature Groupie to conduct volunteer invasive removal workdays.	CC, RC	2025	Low	Minimal	NG, BS, local businesses, CPS, RC, LC
IP4	Establish a Senior Advisory Council and coordinate with Library Café participants to identify recreational opportunities for seniors and to help connect seniors with existing programs.	RC, RD, CML	2024	High	Minimal	FL
IP5	Continue to develop a multi-use plan for the Athletic Fields. Refer to the list of residents' interests on page 7 of this chapter, which include multi-use courts (i.e. basketball and pickleball), a walking track around the fields, a fitness exercise trail, community garden space, indoor recreation and community center space.	RC, RD	2024	High	Minimal	NES
IP6	Address short-term and ongoing maintenance and improvements at the Athletic Fields, including: a. Level fields b. Replace turf c. Lining the fields d. Mow regularly e. Spring cleaning f. Plow parking in winter g. Improve drainage h. Remove trash in fields and parking areas i. Designate handicapped parking j. Develop storage areas for sports equipment and maintenance equipment k. Continue contracting with a port-a-potty service l. Improve parking and enhance vehicular circulation during events	RC, RD	2024-2026	High	Minimal-High	Volunteers, DWP, Contractors, FNR

#	Recommendation	Responsible Party(ies)	Target Date	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
IP7	Prioritize long-term improvements at the Athletic Fields, including: a. Create and install signage with a site plan of the complex b. Replace playground mulch with rubber matting or other material that is more accessible c. Integrate accessible facilities and playground features d. Improve vehicular circulation e. Create seating area around the pavilion f. Pave the parking areas g. Improve stormwater management h. Add lighting i. Add bleachers j. Install trash cans k. Consider amenities like restrooms and concessions and/or renting space to food trucks.	RC, RD	2024-2034	Medium	Minimal-High	Contractors, NHRPA, FNR
IP8	Develop a fitness or exercise trail at the Athletic Fields/Lamprey-Guptill Conservation Land or another Town-owned parcel. Examples can be found at Tibbetts Field in Madbury, Stratham Hill Park in Stratham NH, and the Memorial Hospital in North Conway.	RC, RD, CC	2027	Medium	Low	BS, CARPHN, RC, LC, CBNA
IP9	Incorporate long-term community center planning into Town planning efforts.	RC, RD, PB	2025	Medium	Minimal	CML
IP10	Evaluate the feasibility of creating a community center with indoor recreational space.	RC, RD, PB, TA	2028	Low	Low	Consultant, CML
IP11	Seek grants and funding for recreation and land conservation, such as the Rotary Club, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Recreational Trails Program, Safe Routes to School, and other opportunities for grants and fundraising strategies such as those identified by the National Recreation and Park Association.	RC, RD, CC, PB, LUD	ongoing	High	Minimal	Consultant, SRPC, NHACC
IP12	Continue to collaborate with partners like the Crankpullers and New England Mountain Bike Association to build and maintain trails and maps.	CC, RC	ongoing	Medium	Minimal	NCSC, NEMBA
IP13	Hold joint Conservation Commission and Recreation Commission Meetings at least once per year.	RC, CC, LUD	ongoing	High	Minimal	
IP14	Continue interdepartmental collaboration between the Recreation Department and Library.	RC, CC, CML	ongoing	High	Minimal	

#	Recommendation	Responsible Party(ies)	Target Date	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
IP15	Continue to enhance Northwood's trail network, mapping, and signage.	CC, RC	ongoing	Medium	Medium	NG, BS, local businesses, private landowners, RC, LC
IP16	Improve water access to the lakes for those with mobility issues.	RC, RD, PB	2025	High	Medium	NHP
IP17	Attract recreation-related businesses such as bike shops or kayak rentals.	PB, RC, BOS	2025	Low	Minimal	NHBEA, SRPC
IP18	Improve parking at trailheads and access points.	CC, RC, BOS	ongoing	Medium	Minimal-Medium	BS, SRPC, volunteers, CC
IP19	Coordinate with businesses to allow trail users and residents accessing boat ramps to utilize commercial parking areas.	PB, BOS, CC, RD	ongoing	Low	Minimal	Local businesses
IP20	Repair the eroding shoreline Northwood Lake boat ramp.	RC, RD	2026	High	High	
IP21	Consider developing a Town dock.	RC, RD	2030	Low	High	LA, NHDES
IP22	Conduct strategic land acquisition for Recreation	RC, RD, BOS	Ongoing	Medium	High	CC
IP23	Collect usage data at Athletic Fields, beaches, and other locations.	RC, RD	2025	Medium	Minimal-Low	
IP24	Maintain and improve lake access. a. Replenish sand b. Maintained boat launches c. Improve parking d. Replace picnic tables e. Remove invasives and weeds	RD, RC, DWP, BOS	ongoing	High	Low-High	LA, NHDES, NH Parks, volunteers

#	Recommendation	Responsible Party(ies)	Target Date	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
PS1	Continue to make youth athletic programs and swimming lessons available to Northwood's residents.	RD, RC	ongoing	High	Minimal	LLC
PS2	Considering partnering with active volunteers, neighboring communities, and youth sport organizations to initiate a youth athletic association and expand youth athletic programs.	RC, RD	2025	Medium	Minimal	ORYA, NYBA, BBL, CBNA, UNH, CPS
PS3	Continue to host diverse recreation, leisure, and educational events for all ages.	RD, RC, CML	ongoing	High	Low	
PS4	Identify opportunities to create and sustain programs and facilities for seniors through user fees and other mechanisms.	RD, RC, CML	ongoing	High	Minimal	Local clubs and groups
PS5	Collaborate with Lake Associations to host educational and nature appreciation events and activities.	RC, RD, CC	2026	Medium	Low	LA

#	Recommendation	Responsible Party(ies)	Target Date	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
C1	Expand, maintain, and advertise the community calendar. Add dates of events, program registration, board, commission, and committee meetings, and other important dates.	RC, RD	ongoing	High	Minimal	Town staff, Boards, Commissions
C2	Create an online schedule and procedures for scheduling and renting Town-owned facilities.	BOS, RC	2024	High	Minimal	Town staff
C3	Improve the function and user-friendliness of the Town's website and ensure information about all recreation programs and events is on the website.	BOS, RC, RD	2025	High	Low	Consultant
C4	Develop consistent signs and branding for all Town facilities, lands, and recreational amenities to install when replacement signage is needed.	RC, RD, CC	2027	Low	Medium	BS, Volunteers, SRPC, Contractor
C5	Add kiosks with trail maps to popular trailheads.	CC, RC	2030	Low	Low-High	BS, Volunteers, SRPC, Contractor
C6	Install signage about trail and road usage in locations where motorized vehicles are not permitted.	CC, BOS	2026	Medium	Minimal	
C7	Increase residents' awareness of how tax dollars are used and how recreation programs are funded.	RC, RD, BOS, BC	2024	High	Minimal	
C8	Advertise and support programs offered by CBNA and UNH.	RC, RD	ongoing	Low	Minimal	

#	Recommendation	Responsible Party(ies)	Target Date	Priority	Cost	Potential Partners
R1	Enforce resident-only parking at beaches.	CEO, RD, PD	2025	Medium	Minimal-Medium	
R2	Permit recreational uses and retail in commercial areas of Northwood via Zoning Ordinance.	PB	ongoing	High	Minimal	

Potential Funding Sources

Agency/Organization	Grant/Program Name	Conservation	Invasives	Parks and Sports Facilities	Trails	Climate Adaptation
NH Dept. Agriculture, Markets & Food	NH State Conservation Committee Grant Program/Moose Plate Grant	X				
Land and Community Heritage Investment Program	Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP)	X				
NH Dept. Natural & Cultural Resources	Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Program	X			X	
US Fish & Wildlife Service	North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grant	X				
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service	Conservation Stewardship Program	X				
Open Space Institute	Resilient Landscapes Initiatives	X				X
NH Dept. Transportation	NH Safe Routes to School				X	
NH Dept. Environmental Services	Invasive Species Program		X			
US Dept. Agriculture	Community Facilities Direct Loan & Grant Program			X		
US Dept. Agriculture	Rural Development Grants			X		
US Dept. Housing & Urban Development	Community Development Block Grant			X		
National Park Service	Land and Water Conservation Fund - Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program			X		

¹ NH Department of Environmental Services. Beach Sampling Program. Northwood Lake Town Beach. <https://www4.des.state.nh.us/OneStopPub/Beach/NH9208822013annualreport.pdf>

² Ibid.

³ NH Fish and Game Department. NH Geodata Portal, NH Recreational Trails. April 2024.

⁴ NH State Parks. Accessibility. Outdoor Recreation Opportunities for People of All Abilities.

<https://www.nhstateparks.org/about-nh-parks/who-we-are/park-accessibility>

⁵ Town of Northwood Annual Reports. Years 2013-2023.

⁶ Matt Frye, Recreation Commission Chair, Email Correspondence. May 2024.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ RSL Demographics Inc. NH Office of Planning and Development. State of New Hampshire, State County and Municipal Planning Projections: 2020-2050. <https://www.nheconomy.com/getmedia/0205c62d-9c30-4b00-9c9e-d81d8f17b8b3/NH-Population-Projections-2020-2050-Final-Report-092022.pdf>

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ New Hampshire Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. 2024-2028.

[https://www.nhstateparks.org/NHStateParks/media/NHStateParks/PDFs/Community-Recreation/NH-SCORP-2024-28-Final-3-5-24-\(1\).pdf](https://www.nhstateparks.org/NHStateParks/media/NHStateParks/PDFs/Community-Recreation/NH-SCORP-2024-28-Final-3-5-24-(1).pdf)

¹¹ National Recreation and Park Association. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Parks and Recreation Report.

<https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/diversity-equity-inclusion-in-parks-and-recreation-report/>

¹² Lemcke-Stampone, Mary D.; Wake, Cameron P.; and Burakowski, Elizabeth, "New Hampshire Climate Assessment 2021" (2022). The Sustainability Institute. 71. <https://scholars.unh.edu/sustainability/71>

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Smith, Madeleine, et al. 2024 From a Shorter Winter Season to More Storm Damage: New Hampshire Outdoor Recreation Providers Feel Climate Impacts far More than Visitors. <https://carsey.unh.edu/publication/nh-outdoor-recreation-providers-feel-climate-impacts-far-more-than-visitors>

¹⁵ NH Department of Environmental Services. Cyanobacteria in New Hampshire Waters factsheet. 2023.

<https://www.des.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt341/files/documents/2020-01/wmb-10.pdf>

¹⁶ New Hampshire Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. 2024-2028.

[https://www.nhstateparks.org/NHStateParks/media/NHStateParks/PDFs/Community-Recreation/NH-SCORP-2024-28-Final-3-5-24-\(1\).pdf](https://www.nhstateparks.org/NHStateParks/media/NHStateParks/PDFs/Community-Recreation/NH-SCORP-2024-28-Final-3-5-24-(1).pdf)